1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

society. Schebesta also mentions other instruments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and the secret society) among the south Lese, namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asaragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.

Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager element of initiation associated with circumcision and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element of initiation into the men's secret society (*toré*).

Marriage

Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult to determine which is the stronger, the interests of the hunting band or the interests and mutual affection of the two individuals concerned.

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karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *toré*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

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The *toré* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *anyoto*, *nebeli*, *molimo*, and *lusomba* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *toré* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own.

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam) which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *toré* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings.

The meeting place contains the hut of *toré*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some-

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times called *lusomba* in Schebesta's account. All these instruments, he claims, however, produce sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of a leopard's claw.

A further inquiry made among the archers in 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta, 1952, 279) and added some supplementary facts. The *toré* hut is to be found near or in the camp itself. Women and children may attend the *toré* ceremonies organized by the men. The "presidents" are an old man and an old woman. The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, implored for help in the hunt. The society, Schebesta concludes, has a religious aspect. This same study revealed the use of three wooden trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodzo*), in fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through which the performer sings into it (*luma*); and three small whistles (*ilitodo*).

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[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

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He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 575 881 177 114

As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

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society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange.

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

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Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do not participate fully in the proceedings of the *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

It seems that with the net hunters the ***nkumbi*** serves merely to give status in villager society. The Mbuti have different forms of initiation into the religious associations of their own men and women; the ***molimo*** and ***elima***, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

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SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the archers, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *toré* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *karé* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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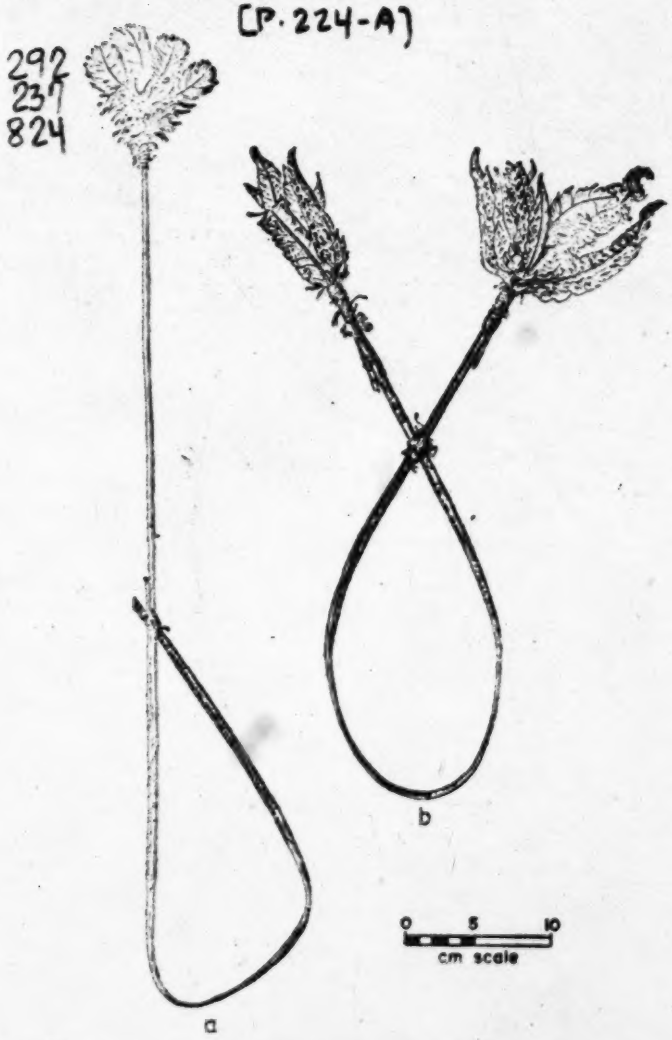

[535] [575] [71] FIG. 50. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and feathers, at will, and worn during *molimo* dances. Similar headdresses may occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[NET HUNTERS]

• 575 special *elima* songs by initiated girls and women, to mark any event of special importance to the womenfolk of the camp. The *elima* is an association that serves to bind women of otherwise different backgrounds together. It not only emphasizes their unity as a group opposed to the group of men, but also emphasizes their identification with the hunting band as a whole. It serves as a means of religious expression for the women just as the *molimo* does for the men. It operates separately, but simultaneously, on occasions of common religious significance. Unfortunately, details are lacking in the Putnam material as to the exact occasions on which each of these associations functions.

[081]

[P. 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-C]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden.

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *toré* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[NET HUNTERS]

The physical discipline and training in the *nkumbi* camp undoubtedly toughen the body, and the boy emerges, even after a short *nkumbi* of two months' duration, very much more adult than on his entry (see my separate account, 1957, of the *nkumbi*). But as far as the Mbuti are concerned, he is still a child, until he has proved himself a hunter. As he grows older, he is allowed to sit with the men in the evenings and gradually to take part in their conversation and some of their activities. He may even be allowed to sit nearby as they sing songs of the *molimo*, but not to take full part. Mrs. Putnam, however, believes that the *nkumbi* does entitle the boy to partial membership, at least, in the *molimo*. She holds this opinion because of her personal knowledge that certain boys who previously were secluded with the womenfolk in their huts during *molimo* proceedings, as she was herself, were not secluded following their *nkumbi* initiation. As a woman, however, she was unable to witness the *molimo* itself, except for some dances she caught sight of by chance. My own material indicates that anyone who has been acclaimed as a hunter is allowed to take full part in the association's proceedings and that there are *nkumbi* initiates who are not considered as hunters and who are definitely barred from full participation. The Putnam material demonstrates the close relation of hunting skill

575 • 561 88

[554] [224]

[P. 224-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 225-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[NET HUNTERS]

575 561 88 [554] [224] to status in the band and the fact that young men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed particular prowess as hunters may take a prominent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence of any detailed information on formal initiation into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some certainty, from the available material, that among the net hunters membership is associated primarily with hunting skill.

575 796 With regard to the proceedings of the association, all reports from this district indicate that the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the greatest importance to the community: various crises, and particularly death. A fuller account is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340); a summary is given here.

534 [192] The word *molimo* is used to denote the association, its proceedings, and a musical instrument. Only one instrument is reported by the Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet. But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions having heard the trumpet one night and thinking that it sounded very different from the one she had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P-225-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ble then that there may be different types of instrument, but evidently not used in conjunction. Anne Putnam further mentions having heard sounds that she took to be animal sounds but that may in fact have been singing pots as described by Schebesta (1952, 279). The only instrument that she or her husband mentions, however, is the trumpet, and no description of it is given. 534

This instrument is an essential part of the proceedings; its use marks the difference between two grades of *molimo* meeting. A meeting in which the trumpet is not used does not carry the significance that one with the trumpet does. There is no information as to exactly when it is used and when not, but it is recorded that the trumpet is heard during meetings following death, during serious illness, or during some crisis affecting the welfare of the band as a whole. It is frequently associated with song, accompanied by split-stick clappers, *banja* (Fig. 52) that are apparently peculiar to the *molimo*. 534 575 796 [533]

A third grade of meeting is that from which women and children are not excluded, during 533 575 796

[P. 225-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

FIG. 52. Split clappers, *banja*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

533 which *molimo* songs may or may not be sung. Such a meeting may be said to be religious, in that it is known by all that the songs effect some kind of communion with the God of the Forest, but they are not held with any specific purpose. After an evening meal the men sit together around the main fire, talking and smoking. The subject of conversation may take a serious turn, or there may simply be a long silence during which one or another of the men starts singing. In either case someone quite spontaneously starts singing a *molimo* song, and the others join in. At such times the women and children remain sitting, as is their habit, around their individual fires outside their huts; they

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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533 are not expected to retire to their huts. Only if
575 the singing develops a certain turn do they re-
796 treat. They know that certain songs have more significance than others, and, on hearing these, they retire. It is unusual, however, for an ordinary meeting of the men to develop to this extent.

575 Usually the trumpet is heard at about the
533 time the band normally retires for the night.
534 The women in any case have been aware of
796 whatever crisis is the occasion for the meeting and are prepared for it. On hearing the trumpet, they take their children and shut themselves in their huts. None will come out, even to cross the clearing. The men sit close together around one of the fires. As they sing, the *molimo* trumpet echoes their song, sometimes coming close, sometimes going far away into the forest. The *molimo* may come right into the camp itself and install itself, unseen, close to where the men are
[535] sitting. At a given point the men may suddenly start dancing through the fire, scattering the ashes and cinders to all sides. Shortly afterwards the participants go to bed. The singing may last only two or three hours, or may con-

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam material. Once a meeting is begun, it may continue nightly for as long as a month. It is obligatory for all members to attend, and those who are away visiting return to take part. Visitors in the camp also take part if they qualify as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplicatory but are mainly repetitions of one or other of the names of the God of the Forest, or affirmations of his goodness and omnipotence. The songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is undoubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[NET HUNTERS]

There is, however, some evidence that indicates another usage of the *molimo* society, more in accord with Schebesta's interpretation of its social function. Anne Putnam reports having once been in a hunting camp when there was some commotion, fairly early in the evening, and the women shouted that the *molimo* was coming. All the women and children promptly fled to their huts and shut themselves in, with much loud complaining. Shortly afterward, the trumpet was heard in the distance and then, closer at hand, the sound of a chicken being killed, which evidently called forth a renewed burst of anger from the women. The men in the camp started singing, and the women became quiet. The singing lasted until nearly dawn. In the morning it was explained to Mrs. Putnam that the *molimo* had taken a chicken and would not pay. "But that is the way of the *molimo*," explained her male informant.

That evening a basket appeared in the camp, hung up in a prominent place, filled with plantains—a gift for the *molimo*. Members were able to help themselves from the basket, and the women were expected to keep it filled. After all the women had gone to bed, the men started singing, although they had said that they were not going to sing that night. As the singing

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[p. 227-A]

505 533 534 782 796 reached a climax (drums were being used, unusual for a religious meeting of the *molimo*), the trumpet arrived. Anne Putnam heard one of the hunters say, "We shall give the *molimo* a present tonight." Another said that there was nothing to give. Then one of the more important but younger hunters said, "We'll give it water." At this point Anne Putnam looked out and saw water being thrown over a figure that seemed to be white and that was playing the trumpet. The figure did not flinch and continued playing, while the hunter who suggested throwing the water laughed. Shortly afterward the trumpet left, and the men sang without the drums before going to bed.

During this same meeting of the *molimo*, the basket was kept filled with food for the men of the association. The singing went on each night, sometimes with drums, sometimes without. On some occasions the singing, particularly when there were no drums, appears to have been serious. At other times the meeting seems to have been more in the nature of a joke, as in the case of the water throwing, and on another occasion when the *molimo* kept moving about in the bush

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.
796 Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy
[823] dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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for the particularly long and intense singing at that time.

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not clear and which took place down near the village. One villager took part. The trumpet and the performer, covered with a cloth, were carried in from the forest on a crude litter and disappeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have witnessed were of the more serious kind, following the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally a period, early in the night, during which the men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ter. During this time the food was being cooked, and the women were still chattering, though shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coincidence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meeting, described by Anne Putnam. It is the custom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the women, and all the men had to run away every time they saw it. But then the men caught the

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

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[P. 233-C]

The general observations that can be made from this collection of legends are: 538

1. The Mbuti of the Epulu are remarkably little concerned with matters relating to origin and tradition.

2. Their legends can be classified under three main sections: legends concerning their social life, legends relating to the animal and human kingdoms, and legends concerning the supernatural. In fact, the second section falls in part into social relations and in part into supernatural relations, but we mention it here to show the correspondence with Joset's (1948) classification for the archers.

While there are no professional storytellers among the Epulu net hunters, there are individuals who have a greater mastery of the art than others. They seem to hold an important position in the community, especially in relation to the activities of the *molimo* society. The storyteller and the clown seem to occupy a privileged position and to have a definite role to play in the men's society. Whether this also applies to the women of the *elima* is not known (p. 216). 538 564 [515] [522]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age.

555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *toré* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b).

114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against

789 789 177 824

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

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551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a
[602] grandfather's name is another indication of the lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor
[614] names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
[101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

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Mbuti

[p. 246-C]

Another very striking difference between the archers and the net hunters concerns the initiation of boys. As this is treated more fully below (p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between Pygmy and villager initiates among the net hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places great importance on this pact for his archers, probably because of his insistence (1952, 281) on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an initiation into the religious association of *toré* for both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by Costermans (1938) for the archers and is contradicted by my own experience among the net hunters. In any case, if there is a difference between the two groups over the significance of *nkumbi* initiation (and it may well be only a difference of interpretation rather than of fact), it does not seem directly related to any difference in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with ritual connections, such difference as exists in the two accounts seems to be associated more directly with prevailing differences in villager custom rather than with any inherent differences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the nature and function of the closed associations, are more properly the subject of discussion of the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the difference between net hunters and archers, which is our main concern here.

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INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold [121] equally well among the archers. It is simply one of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light [975] of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [192] important question when he questions Schebesta's assertion that the *tore* society is an in- [196] tegral part of the religious system of the archers and that Tore' is applicable as a term for God.
[P. 248-B]

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local villager custom. The latter ceremony is conducted entirely by the villagers and at their expense. On these occasions the villager takes the leading part and carries out his own ritual, but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his own indigenous way of recognizing the event. The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy adds to his own.

With initiation the situation may seem to be different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the villager custom of initiation accompanied by circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend the same initiation schools which are always run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation is nothing if not entry into a very definite indigenous system of values, yet here we have the Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordinate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Schebesta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or villager, into membership of the Lese *toré* association (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent, the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

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of this association is not clear from his various accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely connected with religious belief and practice. If so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating, as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on the villager as the *nkumbi*. It would all fall neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give, of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between the two peoples.

Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed by casual observation of the practice of *nkumbi* in the Epulu District, among the net hunters and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the survey, however, there is one striking difference between the account by Putnam and that by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's description of any institution such as *karé* brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 *nkumbi* at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the *nkumbi* at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the *nkumbi* on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-B]

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[P. 254-C]

conversation among the *ganza* at night and in their constant burlesque.

Schebesta (1948, 508–510) says that, for the archers, the *toré* association has both social and religious functions and that membership is common to both villagers and Pygmies through the *nkumbi* initiation. Among the net hunters the term *molimo* is used instead of the term *toré*, and among the Bira villagers the word has apparently similar usage. Thus the *molimo* horn is an instrument that is sacred to both villagers and Mbuti. The villager *molimo* normally makes itself heard during the *nkumbi*, when the young initiates are introduced to it for the first time. It made no appearance at all during the all-Pygmy 1954 *nkumbi*. Evidently it was unable to appear as there were no villager boys among the *ganza*, and the villager *molimo* has a distinct totemic aspect that excludes the Mbuti. Yet for the Mbuti, in particular, the instrument is associated with their most profound magico-religious concepts, and it is inconceivable that they should regard the *nkumbi* as initiation into their own religious society without the inclusion of their version of the *molimo* horn.

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nkumbi offers the Mbuti an opportunity for asserting their individuality at the same time that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

[P. 256-87]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.256-C]

to their previous status in the Pygmy camp and even returned to the care and authority of their mothers. None of these boys was allowed to take part in subsequent meetings of the *molimo*. The reason—they were not "hunters," they had not killed "real animals" (i.e., animals large enough to be worth distributing among the band, as opposed to the small animals caught by children and that are not worth dividing except within the family). To kill "real animals," usually antelope, a boy must be old enough to be allowed to wander away from his father during the hunt and to try his luck at either end of the semicircle of nets, where animals might escape and be shot with bow and arrow, speared, or caught with the hands.

Entry into the *molimo* therefore depends on a combination of physical growth and prowess. Boys seem to qualify by the time they reach the age of 14. Once a member, one is a full member; there is no hierarchy within the *molimo*; like the *elima* it is a religious association without priests. There is no ritual to be performed; all members play the same part in the meetings of the association with the exception of one who is delegated to play the *molimo* horn. The choice invariably falls on the best performer present, without regard for age or other qualifications.

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Mbuti

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social function at the moment because of insufficient information.) It fulfills its purpose through song and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The association may meet informally any evening as the men sit around the main campfire. They may sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but the horn will not be heard. Women and children are not excluded from the group, though, as is their normal habit, they usually keep to their own individual firesides. The association meets formally following any crisis such as death, serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting. Women and children are then rigidly excluded, and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occasions compel the attendance of all members. Adult members of the hunting band who are away come back; adult male visitors to the camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and practice among the net hunters, nor, according to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.

[P. 256-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
• 575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
[858] seem to be the non-participation of women and
[885] children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
[533] bers of the band, the use of special songs and
the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

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796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
797 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[D 257-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 257-C]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their unity. Their means of communication are special songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in terms of explicit supplication. They merely call on the God of the Forest by constant repetition of his name (frequently changing from one name to another, it seems for the sake of variety and euphony), and an occasional recitation of his qualities as the source of all good in the Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the *molimo* horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

796 776 778 782 595 • 796 776 778 782 533 595

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

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With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women are members, and participation is compulsory in one's own camp or when visiting another. Communication with the forest God is again established by means of songs, special and sacred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of puberty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are concerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.) Both associations meet in the forest camp but out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring huts. Young children may be present. The exception, when the men take part in the meeting of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the initiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

[P 257-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbut

[P. 258-A]

881 hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I
885 have never witnessed nor been told of any for-
224 mal rite introducing the new hunter to the asso-
575 ciation, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only
881 act that might be regarded as a formal token of
885 initiation is the cutting of three sets of three
304 vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each
575 side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

1: Turnbull E-4-5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 The contrast between the more formal *elima* initiation and this informal initiation into the *molimo* requires explanation, and more needs to be known about the function of these associations before any such explanation can be offered. It may be, in part, a consequence of the participation of Pygmy boys in the *nkumbi*; it may be that, as Schebesta (1957, 78) suggests, the *elima* (*elimo*) is of villager origin and has been adopted by the Pygmies. Or it may be that we have underestimated the part played by the young men in the *elima* festival described (p. 216). It is for both girls and boys, equally, a formal occasion recognizing their physical maturity and their prowess—the girls as proficient in womanly art and the boys as proficient in physical strength and endurance.

575 (881) Until further material is available it is impossible to elaborate on initiation among the Mbuti. It is sufficient to show that, among the net hunters at least, religious associations there exist for men and women, each with some form of initiation practiced without the aid or presence of villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. The function of these asso-

[P 258-B]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the difference between Schebesta's account of the archer *tord* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net

[p. 294-B]